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Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-10 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 SAM-01 ACDA-05

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O 151020Z OCT 75
FM AMCONSUL LUANDA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4321
INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
USCINCLANT
USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUANDA 1566

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS PINT MILI AO
SUBJEVT: UPDATE ON THE MILITARY SITUATION FNLA WINS MAJOR VICTORY

1. ACCORDING TO THE PORTUGESE MILITARY AUTHORITIES, FNLA NOW CONTROLS ALL OF THE HIGHWAY BETWEEN CAXITO AND CARMONA. MPLA WAS STILL WT QUIBAXE ON OCTOBER 13. THE PORTUGESE ATTRIBUTE THE MPLA DEFEAT TO THREE PRINCIPAL FACTORS: FIRST THE USE BY FNLA OF TRAINED WHITES SECOND, THE DISPERSAL OF MPLA FORCES OVER SEVERAL FRONTS AND; THIRD DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE MPLA POLITICAL AND MILITARY ARMS (FAPLA) AS WELL AS INTERNAL DISSENTION WITHIN THE GIVEN NITO ALVES AT THE TIME OF THE INITIAL MPLA SUC-CESSES INJULY AND AUGUST IN THE FIRST MILITARY REGION. IN FACT, ACCORDING TO THE PORTUGESE, THE KEY MAN IN THE REGION AND THE BRAINS, WAS COMMANDER KILUANJE. NITA ALVES HAS SINCE BEEN GIVEN A JOB IN LUANDA, BUT RESENTMENTS REMAIN AND AS A RESULT THE FORCES IN THE FIRST MILITARY REGION WERE NOT AS EFFECTIVE AS THEY
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SHOULD HAVE BEEN. ONE EXAMPLE OF THE PROBLEM WAS THE TENDENCY

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OF TROOPS AND OFFICERS FROM THE NORTH TO TAKE WEEKENDS IN
LUANDA, A PRACTICE THAT INDUCED THE GENERAL STAFF TO ISSUE
AND ORDER PROHIBITING THE ENTRY INTO LUANDA OF ANY FAPLA ELEMENT
WITHOUT A PASS.

2. THE PORTUGESE BELEIVE THAT FNLA WILL NOW STRIKE DUE SOUTH
TOWARD ZENZA BO ITOMBE ON THE CATETE ROAD. IF THEY ARE
SUCCESSFUL IN CUTTING THE ROADJN MPLA WILL BE IN BAD SHAPE.
MEANWHILE, MPLA HAS DRIVEN NORTH OF SAMBA CAJU ON THE ROAD
TO CARMONA.

3. IN THE CENTER OF THE COUNTRY, MPLA HAS SHUT OFF THE POWER
AT ALTO CATUMBELA, WHICH SUPPLIES ELECTRICITY TO NOVA LISBOA
THE LACK OF POWER HAS ALSO SHUT DOWN THE PUMPS THAT SUPPLY
WATER TO NOVA LISBOA, WHEN GENERAL ALMENDRA WAS IN NOVA LISBOA
ON OCTOBER 12, UNPTA SECRETARY GENERAL NZAU PUNA TOLD HIM HE HAD
CALLED THE DAM TO FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENED AND WAS TOLD BY THE
WHITE TECHNICIANS THAT THERE HAD BEEN A "POLITICAL MALFUNCTION".
UNITA PLANS TO PUT DIESEL UNITS INTO SERVICE; THERE ARE A NUMBER
OF GENERATORS FORMERLY USED TO SUPPLY POWER AND THE BENGUELA
RAILWAY HAS SOME. ACCORDING TO THE PORTUGESE, NUMBER
OF TANK TRUCKS FROMHSOUTHWEST AFRICA BROUGHT DIESEL AND GASOLINE
TO NOVA LISBOA DURING THE PERIOD THAT UNITA/FNLA CONTROLLED
PEREIRA D'ECA A FEW WEEKS AGO. DIESEL STOCKS ARE ADEQUATE
FOR SOME WEEKS, BUT GASOLINE IS TILL IN VERY SHORT SUPPLY.

4 THE PORTUGESE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT UNITA HAS THE CAPIBILITY
TO RETAKE LOBITO. BECAUSE OF THEIR INABILITY TO MOVE WESTWARD
THEY ARE NOW STRIKING SOUTHWARD, WHERE THE MPLA IS WEAKEST.
AT THE SAME TIME, IT DOES NOT APPEAR THAT MPLA IS GAINING GROUND
ALTHOUGH THE PORTUGESE BELEIVE MPLA WILL MAKE HEADWAY AGAINST
UNITA BEFORE LONG.

5. THE PORTUGESE NOW BELIEVE THAT MANY OF THE CUBANS WHO
LANDED WITH TWO FREIGHTERS SEVERAL DAYS AGO ARE INSTRUCTORS.
THE MPLA TOLD THE PORTUGESE MILITARY THAT THE CUBANS MERELY
ACCOMPANIED THE CARGO AND HAVE LEFT. THE PORTUGESE DO NOT
YET KNOW OF WHAT THE MATERIAL CONSISTS, BUT MUCH OF IT IS
VEHICLES. THE NUMBER OF CUBANS WHO HAVE REMAINED IN ANGOLA
IS STILL NOT KNOWN, BUT THERE MAY BE BETWEEN ONE HUNDRED AND
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THREE HUNDXRED.

6. MPLA IS IN CONTROL OF LUSO. A FOREIGN OBSERVER WHO WAS
THERE ABOUT OCTOBER 8 REPORTED THAT LARGE NUMBERS OF KATANGAN
EX-GENDARMES WERE IN EVIDENCE. THEY WERE DISTINGUISHABLE
BY THEIR PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS AND A SHOULDER PATCH, WHICH
THE OBSERVER COULD NOT REMEMBER IN ITS ENTIRETY, BUT WHICH
CONTAINED THE ZORD "COMMANDO."

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7. UNITA/FNLA DIFFERENCES CONTINUE AND HAVE BECOME VERY
SERIOUS ACCORDING TO NUMBER OF OBSERVERS. WHITE CHIPENDA
TROOPS ARE REPORTED TO HAVE KILLED UNITA CADRES AND
THEIR FAMILIES IN NOVA LISBOA OVER ISSUES THAT ARE NOT
CLEAR. A PORTUGESE AIR FORCE PLANE THAT WENT TO GAGA COUTINHO TO
TAKE OUT 187 PORTUGESE REPORTEDLY STRANDED THERE, WAS SURROUNDED
BY UNITA AND FNLA TROOPS WHO DETAINED THE PLANE. FNLA BEGAN
DISCUSSING SOME UNPLEASANT PUNISHMENT THEY PLANNED TO METE OUT
TO THE CREWS. TO MAKE MATTERS WORSE, THERE WERE ONLY EIGHT
PORTUGESE IN TOWN, DESPITE SAVIMBI'S ASSURANCES LARGE
NUMBERS WERE PRESENT. SAVIMBI HAD ALSO GURARAENTEED PROTECTION
FOR THE CREWS. THE CREWS AND PLANES WERE ALLOWED TO LEAVE
ONLY BECAUSE UNITA AND FNLA FELL TO BICKERING ABOUT WHAT ACTION
TO TAKE AND AS UNITA OUTNUMBERED NLA 300 TO 100 THE PLANES WERE
ALLOWED TO TAKE OFF.

8. THE SITUATION IN CABINDA IS STILL QUIET. THE PORTUGESE
HAVE A FEW MARINES LEFT IN THE DISTRICT. THE PORTUGESE MILITARY
DO NOT BELEIVE THAT FLEC WILL ATTEMHT AN INVASION BECAUSE IT
DOES NOT HAVE THE CAPABILITY AND HAS LOST THE SUPPORT OF
CONGO BRAZZAVILLE.
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